

COMPLETE
Torkington Family Genealogy

TORKINGTON

On 28 August 1875, Sarah Ann Torkington married George Nelson in Hollinwood¹. Fortunately, Torkington is an unusual name in Oldham during the 19th century -- otherwise, it would have been more challenging to identify Sarah Ann's roots. Neither her marriage certificate nor birth certificate lists a father.

Possible Collins Link

There are several candidates for Sally Collins. One stands out in that she was baptized at St. Margarets where the Torkington children were subsequently baptized. The details are: Sarah Collins daughter of Jas. And Sarah Collins, christened 9 Dec. 1787, Hollinwood, St. Margaret, Chadderton. This Sarah Collins had the following siblings all christened at the same church -- Joseph Collins 10 Oct 1784, Jas. Collins 17 Jan 1790, Mary Collins 8 Apr. 1792, John Collins 24 Apr. 1796, Alice Collins 11 Aug. 1799 and Saml Collins 5 Dec 1802.
(ref. C033202)

One story about Sarah Ann from Edith Lewis Warburton (a grand-daughter) is as follows ..."I didn't like my maternal grandmother, she a serious grim faced woman, who never that I can recall ever laughed. One day when I was about four years old. I can distinctly remember thinking, I'll play a joke on gradma, and as she came into the room, I put up both my hands and started to frantically scratch at my head. Alas the joke was on me, she took one look and called my mother "Seran" (Sarah Ann) this child's got nits. Then she got to work, I was doused with mentholated spirits and small toothed combed, until my scalp was almost

raw, and then shampooed with paraffin and soft soap. Ooh my eyes still sting and water at the thought of it. It cured me for all time of playing practical jokes."



Sarah Ann was born September 16, 1844 at Dury Ln, Chadderton as reported by her mother Sally Torkington². No father is listed. Based on the 1841 census it appears that Sally was living with her parents³ Joseph and Sarah Torkington. This would not have been unusual since Sally would have been about 18 in 1844 and unmarried.

A piece of lore past down in the family is that Sally/Sarah and Sarah Ann were Fustian (velvet) weavers and were among the first employees at the newly built mill of Sir

Alfred Emmott, a noted Lancashire industrialist. Previously all weaving had been done in the homes of workers. The Oldham Local Studies Library has identified this mill to be Vale Mill. This is born out somewhat in that

FYI
St. Margaret's in Hollinwood did not conduct marriages until 1836 -- so, though a family was affiliated with St. Margaret's they would have had to marry at another Oldham church, Manchester Cathedral, Parish of Prestwich or another locale.

¹Oldham Registrars Office, marriage Sarah Ann Torkington and George Nelson -- 28 August 1875 -- Union St. Chapel, Oldham, according to the rites and ceremonies of the Independents by John Holgson, Minister (see NELSON, Appendix B for copy of actual marriage certificate)

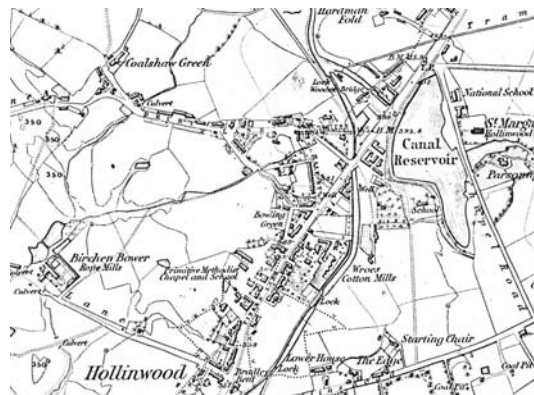
²Birth Certificate -- 16 September 1844, Dury Lane, Chadderton

³1841 Census, Chadderton, Dury/Drury Lane -- Joseph Torkington (50, colliery labourer), Sarah Torkington (50), Sarah Torkington (15), Ann Torkington (13) -- all born in county (see Appendix)

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in the 1861⁴ and 1871⁵ census, the occupations listed are silk weaver and cotton weaver. Also, the 1875 Worrall's Directory of Oldham, lists – Torkington Sarah A., weaver, 51 Lee St.

Lost sight of Sally/Sarah and Sarah Ann after 1841 until 1861 when they re-emerge as the Slater's. Sarah/Sally is still found under this name in 1881 when living with her daughter's family (see NELSON). One interesting tidbit was found in the Bishops Transcripts, 1844-1880, St. Peter's Oldham – baptized 18 Feb 1846, born 30 Nov 1845, Alice, daughter of Robert and Sarah Slater, Manchester St., Engineer.⁶ This would appear to indicate that Sarah married Robert Slater before the 1851 census or that Robert's first wife was also a Sarah/Sally! Also, the 1851 List of Burgesses for Oldham lists – Robert Slater, Westwood Ward, Manchester St.⁷



So, a re-capping of the census information for the main line is given below. On the map picturing Hollinwood as surveyed in 1844-47, Dury or as shown on this map, Drury Lane, is between Coalshaw Green as you head east to the Canal Reservoir. St. Margarets is shown just east of the Canal Reservoir.



Surface workers, c. 1820

1841 Census, Chadderton, Dury/Drury Lane
 Joseph Torkington 50 Colliery Labourer from county
 Sarah Torkington 50 from county
 Sarah Torkington 15 from county
 Ann Torkington 13 from county

1861 Census, Oldham Westwood, St. Marys, Thomas St.
 Robert Slater ?? ?? Saddleworth York
 Sally Slater 40 Silk Weaver Oldham Lanc

William Slater 19 Iron Turner Huddersfield York
 Sarah Ann Slater 16 Cotton Weaver Oldham Lanc

⁴ 1861 Census, Oldham, Westwood, St. Marys, Thomas St -- Robert Slater (Saddleworth york), Sally Slater (40, Silk weaver, Oldham Lanc), William Slater (19, Iron Turner, Huddersfield york), Sarah Ann Slater (16, Cotton Weaver, Oldham Lanc) (see Appendix)

⁵ 1871 Census, Westwood, Oldham, 12 Thomas St -- Sarah Slater (widow, 50, Chadderton Lancs), Sarah Ann Torkington (26, Cotton Weaver, Chadderton Lancs) (see Appendix)

⁶ LDS Film #1545717

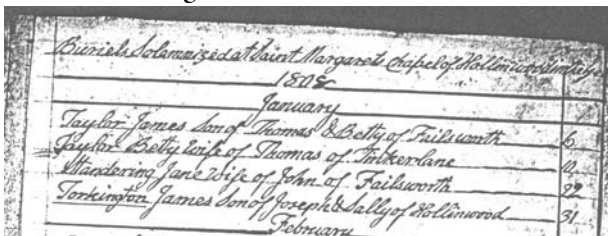
⁷ Oldham Local Studies Library

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1871 Census, Westwood, Oldham, 12 Thomas St.

Sarah Slater 50 Widow Chadderton, Lancashire

Sarah Ann Torkington 26 Unm Cotton Weaver Chadderton, Lancashire



As mentioned earlier, Sally/Sarah appears to have been living with her parents in 1844 (based on the address matching an entry in the 1841 census). Using this information combined with research into the church records for St.

Margarets pictured on page 1)⁸ Hollinwood⁹ we can construct the following family:

Joseph Torkington (Weaver (up to 1810), Labourer(subsequent entries till 1841) and Colliery Labourer (1841 census, wife Sally's death certificate and his death certificate)) + Sally/Sarah had the following children:

James Torkington, baptised 23 November 1806 (born 14 October) – buried 31 January 1808 (see above)

Joseph Torkington, baptised 20 November 1808 (born 18 November) – died 4/6/1868¹⁰

John Torkington, baptised 30 December 1810¹¹

Mary Torkington, baptised 11 April 1813¹²

James Torkington, baptised 31 December 1815¹³

Sarah Ann Torkington, baptised 18 October 1818 – buried 22 June 1820 (1 year, 9 months)

Sally Torkington, baptised 10 June 1821

Colliery Labourer

We have no way to know what job(s) Joseph had in the colliery and sketches depicting two working situations are shown in this section. A Colliery is a Coal Mine. "By the 1830s coal had established itself alongside cotton as one of Oldham's staple industries ... the total number of miners employed in the area in the early 1830s was just over 1,000 men ... The rise of the coal industry is of a spectacular story! There were no breakthroughs in technology similar to those in textiles. The improvements that were important included matters such as better pumping machinery and better techniques for ventilation. Nevertheless, if Oldham had not had coal seams which could be so easily worked, then it is extremely unlikely that the textile industry would have survived ..."

(Source: "Oldham, The Formative Years" by K. McPhillips, 1981, Published by Neil Richardson)
(Source for sketches: "The Compleat Collier" by J.C., A 1990 illustrated reprint from Picks Publishing)

⁸ Author Photo

⁹ LDS Film #1545717, items 3-5, Bishops Transcripts, St. Margarets, Hollinwood, Baptisms and Burials + Oldham Local Studies, Film #24 of St. Margarets Records

¹⁰ Tracked him through the 1841, 1851, and 1861 census of Oldham

(1841) -- School St, Oldham, District #10 -- Joseph Torkington (30, Banksman) + Ann Torkington (30)

(1851) -- Film #87255, living with Taylor family -- Joseph Torkington (42, Outdoor Labourer) + Ann Torkington (40, ? maker) + Ann Torkington (3)

(1861) -- Lime Gate, Werneth, St. Margarets -- Joseph Torkington (52, Bankman, Chadderton) + Ann Torkington (50, Silk Weaver, Oldham) + Ann Torkington (15, Cottage Weaver, Oldham)

And, tracked him through St. Margaret's, Hollinwood, Monumental Inscriptions, 1750-1950 (LDS Film #16587, item 5) -- plot #536 -- Joseph Torkington, 60, 4.6.1868 + Ann Torkington, 55, 22.3.1865 (note that convention is day.month.year)

Also, the IGI lists a marriage for Joseph Torkington to Ann Astington, 24 Dec. 1833, Manchester Cathedral.

¹¹ Appears to have had a son Joseph (buried 7 June 1838 at St. Margarets, Hollinwood -- 1 year) and a wife Fanny. In 1838 lived at Bottom Greenacres Moor (Oldham Local Studies Film #24 St. Margarets records) -- noting that Fanny is a familiar form of Frances there is a marriage listed for a John Torkington + Frances Richardson, Manchester Cathedral, 11 Sept. 1836

¹² Appears to have had a child out of wedlock, Elizabeth sometime in 1831, buried 1 May 1833 (1 year, 7 months) St. Margarets, Hollinwood (same source as for #9)

¹³ An entry on LDS -- Film #1656227, St. Mary's Oldham, Burials 1833-1848 -- maybe appropriate to this sibling
item 3, #733, George son of James and Sarah Torkington, Schoolcroft, 24 Aug. 1840, 2nd yr

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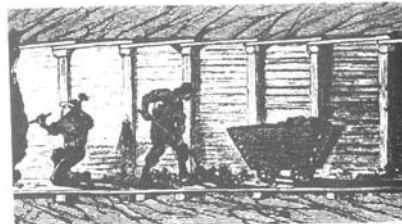
Abner Torkington, baptised 29 January 1824 -- buried

17 February 1833 (9 years)

George Torkington, baptised 10 September 1826 -- buried 9 April 1827 (9 months)

Ann Torkington, baptised 6 April 1828

Nothing more is known of Sally's other siblings. As for the parents, it appears that Joseph Torkington and Sally Collin of Oldham were married in Prestwich on 5 November 1805¹⁴. And, shortly after the 1841 census, they both died -- Sally in 1843 of consumption¹⁵ and Joseph in 1845 of disease of the liver and stomach¹⁶.



Colliers at work, c. 1820

Following the trail of the name indicates that a Joseph Torkington was christened on February 19, 1786 to Geo and Hanh Torkington¹⁷. Six years later a sibling Matty was born^{18 19} -- in this instance, Matty is female. The father Geo was listed as a brickmaker. Further research has not yielded any more siblings or records of George's or Hannah's deaths. The only other trail uncovered is a likely marriage for George and Hannah²⁰:

George Torkington, labourer and Anna wilde of this Parish, spinster married in this church by Banns this thirteenth Day of December in the year one Thousand seven hundred and eighty three by me Thos Fawcett between (George signed and Anna marked) witnessed by George Taylor and Ralph Jackson

Though the listed name is Anna, during this period, the names Ann and Hannah were sometimes interchanged.

In the course of the research into Joseph, we discovered that Matty married on 7 Nov 1805, St. Mary, Oldham to John Taylor.²¹

... when it appeared that the research was completed, Mrs. Edith Warburton (see Appendix A of NELSON) passed along a family shawl to me (received May 2000).



¹⁴Archivist, Central Library, Manchester -- examining Prestwich marriages

¹⁵Death Certificate -- August 15, 1843, Dury Lane, Hollinwood, Chadderton of Consumption and reported September 5, 1843 by Ann Torkington

¹⁶Death Certificate -- August 27, 1845, Dury Lane, Hollinwood, Chadderton of Disease of the liver and stomach for 20 days -- vomiting of blood from the attack, reported September 12, 1845 by Sally Torkington

¹⁷Oldham Local Studies -- Film #24, St. Margarets records -- 19 Feb 1786, Joseph, son of Geo and Hanh Torkington, Old Lane End

¹⁸Oldham Local Studies -- Film #24, St. Margarets records -- 28 March 1794, Matty, dau of George & Hanah Torkington, brickmaker

¹⁹LDS: IGI Lancashire -- marriage of Matty Torkington to John Taylor, 7 November 1805, St. Mary, Oldham (Film M005621 7022)

²⁰Oldham Local Studies -- Film covering St. Marys Oldham marriage records

²¹IGI-Lancashire -- referencing film M005621 7022

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This is the shawl worn by my grandmother Sarah Ann Torkington at her marriage to George Nelson. somewhere around 1873/4 I took it to "The Antiques Roadshow" last year but the lady who deals with dress + textiles wasn't there and the men were not very interested, so I did not get much information or a valuation. One thing is very obvious - it needs careful + specialist cleaning, but they hadnt any advice on what either as a child I used it to cover my dolls, and later wore it in several costume plays, so it has had quite a bit of wear.

She appears to have heard of my long interest in the family's history and desired to keep it in the family. This shawl (pictured below and on preceding page) was worn by Sarah Ann Torkington at her marriage to George Nelson. As with any photo, it's hard to do justice to the shawl; it is made out of silk and has a wonderful soft feel.

The note to the left was the one written by Aunty Edith (Mrs. E. Warburton) when the shawl was sent to me.

There are still several areas of inquiry to be pursued:

- Locate Sarah and Sally Ann in 1851 census (Manchester St. or Thomas St.) – 1851 census indices for Oldham & Chadderton list no Torkingtons other than Joseph as discussed in Footnote #10.
- Obtain marriage certificate for Sarah and Robert Slater – interestingly, Free BMD website lists a marriage for a Robert Slater, 3rd quarter 1854, Manchester. No correlation yet found to a Sally Torkington. If 1845 entry applies to them, then this marriage would be too late. Locating any of them in 1851 census would help alot !



The recent acquisition of the 1881 Lancashire Census on CD has facilitated doing some easier research on non-direct ancestral lines. A search for Sarah Ann's half brother William revealed the following ...

1881 Census, 2 Bridge Yd, Oldham, Lancashire, England²²

William Slater	M	39	M	Head	Iron Turner	Saddleworth, York
Betty Slater	M	37	F	Wife	Cotton Weaver	Oldham, Lancs
Mary H. Slater	U	17	F	Daur	Cotton Reeler	Oldham, Lancs
Martha A. Slater		12	F	Daur	Cotton Piecer	Oldham, Lancs
Robert Slater		9	M	Son	Scholar	Oldham, Lancs
Sarah A. Slater		2	F	Daur		Oldham, Lancs

²² LDS CD, Family History Resource File, 1881 Census, Lancashire ... FHL Film Ref #1341975, PRO Ref RG11, Piece 4078, Folio 102, Page 47

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(Note: though his birth place is listed as Saddleworth and not Huddersfield as in 1861, it matches his dad's birth place. Also, there is a son named Robert, a daughter named Sarah A. and his occupation of Iron Turner matches his occupation in 1861)

Another story about Sarah Ann courtesy of Edith Lewis Warburton (a grand-daughter). "Grandmother was a very determined woman and always got her own way, by fair means or foul. On one occasion my father was due home on leave, and it had been decided that we should have a family photograph taken, mama made me a new dress for the event. Navy blue velvet, with red French knots round the collar and cuffs, she favored the new fashionable shorter look, (about halfway down my legs) but grandmother objected, it should be much longer, down to the ankles, however mama took no notice and completed it in her own way.

On the appointed day, dada spruced up his uniform, blacked his boots, polished his brass buttons and blanched his webbing. Grandmother suggested she should get me ready, while mama went upstairs to complete her toilette, this was done, it wasn't until leaving the house, with no time to spare before our appointment with the photographer, that mama discovered grandmother had let down the hem on my dress, to make it more, what she called decent. It still wasn't as long as she wanted it, it just came to the top of my button boots, but it completely ruined the effect mama had intended, the expression on her face in the resulting photographs registered, her feelings in no uncertain manner."